

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL INFORMATION

A. PURPOSE

This Manual explains DoD policies and procedures on awarding Defense decorations and Service awards; nonmilitary decorations; the acceptance of foreign military decorations by members of the Armed Forces of the United States; and the Office of Secretary of Defense Identification Badge (hereafter referred to as the “OSD Badge”). It describes the various Defense awards; the basis and eligibility requirements for the award; and who is eligible to receive and who is eligible to authorize the award. It tells how to prepare, submit, and process recommendations for Defense decorations and the Joint Meritorious Unit Award (JMUA).

B. DEFINITIONS

1. Joint Activity. For the purpose of this Manual and the eligibility for Defense decorations, the term “joint” connotes activities, operations or organizations in which elements of more than one Service of the United States, as reflected in joint manpower documents, perform joint missions under the auspices of the OSD; the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; or the commander of a Unified or Combined Command. A joint **task** force (JTF) commander, the staff, and other Service members assigned and/or attached to a JTF as individuals (not as members of a Service unit) may also be eligible for Defense decorations and the JMUA to recognize exceptional service or achievement. Members of Service-unique units assigned and/or attached to a JTF retain eligibility for award of personal decorations and unit awards from their parent Services. They may not be awarded Defense decorations nor included in the award of the JMUA. The Director, Joint Staff, provides a list of units awarded the JMUA (Appendix C).

2. Meritorious Service. Individual performance must exceed that expected by virtue of grade and experience, based on accomplishments during an entire tour of duty. Awards given for service must cover the period of the controlled duty tour, plus any extensions and are normally awarded for a period of service greater than 12 months.

3. Outstanding Achievement. An outstanding achievement decoration, also known as an “impact award,” is rare, and is intended to recognize a single specific act or accomplishment, separate and distinct from regularly assigned duties, such as a special project. It is not intended to provide a means to authorize additional decorations or a decoration when the conditions for a completed period of service have not been fulfilled nor is it intended as an automatic award for members assigned to joint activities on temporary duty (TDY) orders. An outstanding achievement covers a short period of time with definite beginning and ending dates. A recommendation for an outstanding achievement award should be submitted only when the achievement is of such magnitude that it cannot be recognized in any other way than by award of

a decoration, and to delay such recognition until completion of the individual's period of service would diminish the significance of the accomplishment.

4. Joint Task Force (JTF). A JTF is a force composed of assigned or attached elements of two or more Military Departments, that is constituted and so designated by the **Secretary** of Defense, or by the commander of a Unified Combatant Command.

5. Principal Staff Assistants. The principal staff assistants are the Under Secretaries of Defense (**USDs**); the Comptroller of the Department of Defense (**C, DoD**); the Director of Defense Research and Engineering (**DDR&E**); the Assistant Secretaries of Defense (**ASDs**); the Director of Operational Test and Evaluation (**DOT&E**); the General Counsel of the Department of Defense (**GC, DoD**); the Inspector General of the Department of Defense (**IG, DoD**); the Assistants to the Secretary of Defense (**ATSDs**); the OSD Directors or equivalents who report directly to the Deputy Secretary of Defense.

6. Secretary Concerned. The Secretaries of the Military Departments.

C. POLICY

It is DoD policy that members of the Armed Forces of the United States shall, through the DoD Military Awards Program, receive tangible recognition for acts of valor, exceptional service or achievement, and acts of heroism. Awards and decorations must be placed into official channels as stated by DoD guidance for that particular award. However, a Member of Congress can request consideration of a proposal for the award or presentation of a decoration not previously submitted in a timely fashion. Upon request of a Member of Congress, the Secretary concerned shall review a proposal for the award or presentation of decoration (or the upgrading of a decoration), either for an individual or unit, that is not otherwise authorized to be presented or awarded due to limitations established by law **or** policy. Based upon such review, the Secretary shall make a determination as to the merits of approving the award or presentation of the decoration and other determinations necessary to comply with congressional reporting under 10 U.S.C. 1130 (reference (a)).

D. RESPONSIBILITIES

Specific responsibilities involving individual Defense decorations or Service awards are outlined in the applicable chapters of this Manual. The general responsibilities involving the management of the DoD Military Awards Program are as follows:

1. The Assistant Secretary of Defense for Force **Management Policy** shall:

a. Develop, publish, and maintain a single DoD Manual governing the DoD Military Awards Program, consistent with DoD 5025.1-M (reference (b)).

b. Ensure that implementing documents by the Military Departments and the DoD Components conform to pertinent laws, Executive orders, regulations, and DoD policy.

c. Provide the policies and procedures necessary to manage the DoD Military Awards Program.

d. Adjudicate individual exceptions to policy.

2. The Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff shall:

a. Designate U.S. military operations that qualify for award of the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal and the Armed Forces Service Medal.

b. Establish campaign medal criteria and dates of eligibility commencement and termination.

c. Ensure that the Director, Joint Staff shall:

(1) Establish procedures for his staff to ensure compliance with the policies and procedures outlined in this Manual.

(2) Adjudicate individual Defense awards exceptions to policies for Service members permanently assigned to joint commands or organizations reporting to or through the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

3. The Director of Administration and Management, Office of the Secretary of Defense shall:

a. Provide the policies governing the issuance of the OSD Badge.

b. Administer the following:

(1) The procurement and issuance of the OSD Badge.

(2) The entrance date of Service members proposed for authorization to wear the OSD Badge.

(3) The procurement, stocking, and issuance of certificates and citations for the Defense Distinguished Service Medal (DDSM) and the Defense Superior Service Medal (DSSM).

(4) The processing of all individual Defense decoration nominations not handled by the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. That includes all the DDSMS, and all the DSSMS and , below from the OSD, the Defense Agencies, and the DoD Field Activities.

4. The Director, Defense Logistics Agency shall:

a. Procure, stock, and issue Defense decorations and awards for the OSD and the DoD Field Activities, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Unified Combatant Commands, the joint activities, the Defense Agencies, and the Military Departments.

b. Procure, stock, and issue certificates for the Defense Meritorious Service Medal (DMSM), the Joint Service Commendation Medal (JSCM), and the Joint Service Achievement Medal (JSAM), as authorized by the ASD(FM&P), for the OSD and DoD Field Activities, the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Unified Combatant Commands, the joint activities, the Defense Agencies, and the Military Departments.

5. The Secretaries of the Military Departments shall:

a. Establish procedures in their respective Departments to ensure compliance with the policies and procedures outlined in this Manual.

b. Administer the Military Service awards program for non-Defense decorations or awards in their Department.

c. Comply with the provisions of E.O. 3524 (reference (c)), as they pertain to the designing of medals and insignia.

6. The Secretary of the Army shall:

a. Provide for the furnishing of heraldic services under regulations prescribed by him or her and based on the authority in 10 U.S.C. 4594 (reference (d)), an authority designated by him or her may, on the request of, and subject to approval by, the Secretary of another Military Department or the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, design flags, insignia, badges, medals, seals, decorations, guidons, streamers, final pieces for flagstaves, buttons, buckles, awards, trophies, marks, emblems, rosettes, scrolls, braids, ribbons, knots, tabs, cords, and similar items for the requesting Department.

b. Advise other Federal Agencies on matters of heraldry.

c. Prescribe regulations providing for reimbursement for services furnished.